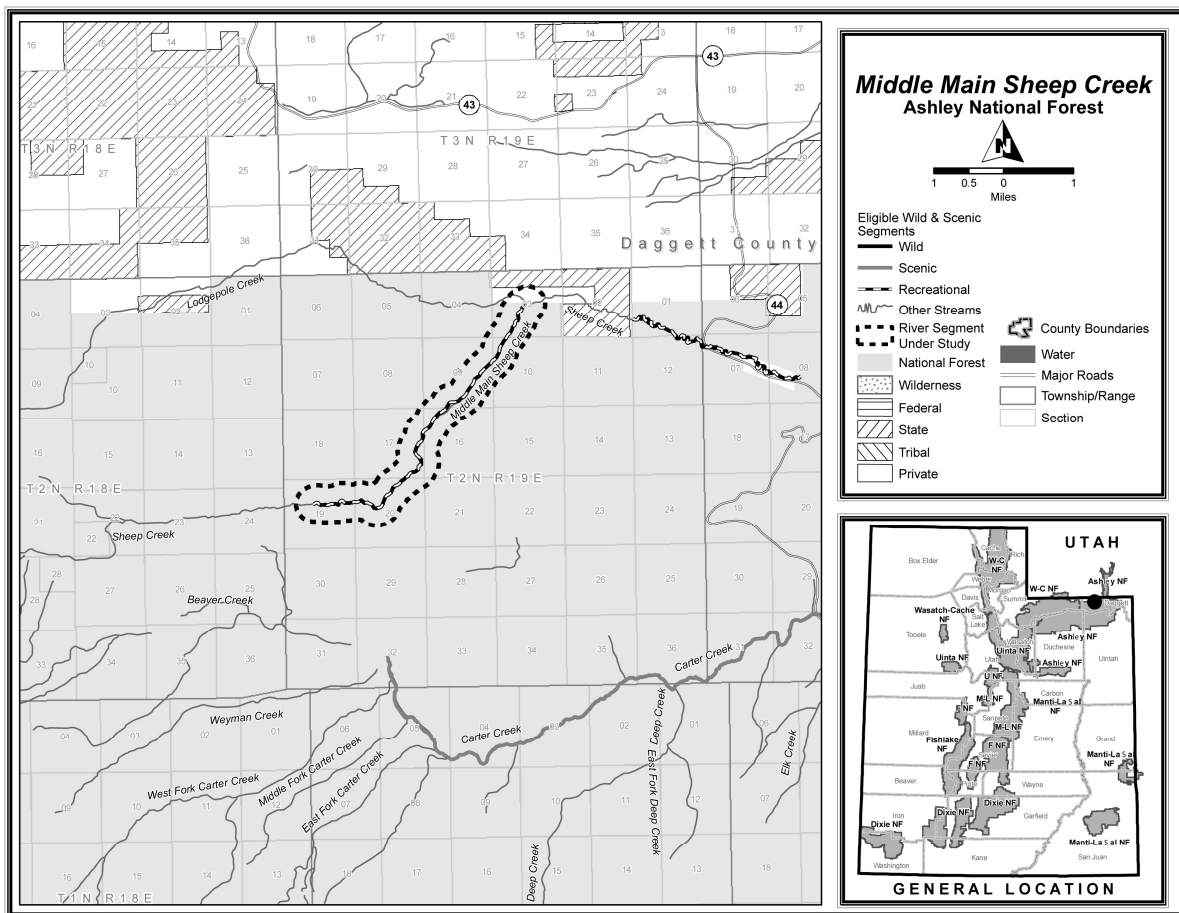


Middle Main Sheep Creek Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Middle Main Sheep Creek

River Mileage:

Studied: 5.1 miles, from the canyon rim above Palisades Memorial Park to the confluence with Lodgepole Creek

Eligible: Same

Location:

Middle Main Sheep Creek	Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Daggett County, Utah		Congressional District 2	
	Start	End	Classification	Miles
Segment 1	SE ¼ NW ¼ Sect. 19, T 2 N, R 19 E, SLM	NW ¼ SE ¼ Sect. 3, T 2 N, R 19 E, SLM	Recreational	5.1

Physical Description of River Segment:

This segment has extensive, very steep rugged canyon side slopes with Uinta Mountain Group, Mississippian limestone, Weber sandstone and other various formations. High incidence of faulting provides high diversity of geologic features. Colluvial and debris flows are common along the side canyons and tributaries. The stream itself is relatively confined in a very steep canyon comprised of steep bedrock cliffs. Faulting has created some of the most spectacular bedrock exposures, and the area is part

of the Sheep Creek National Geological Area. Big Spring within this segment contributes flows to the drainage, as is part of an underground karst system. Vegetation is highly variable and related to aspect and geology with Douglas-fir on north aspects and mountain brush, sagebrush, and grass on southerly aspects.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility of Wild & Scenic Rivers - Ashley National Forest, July 2005

Determination of Free-flowing Condition: The natural stream flow of the river in this segment is unimpaired. The segment is free-flowing.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV): The scenic, geologic/hydrologic ORVs have been identified as nationally important. The wildlife ORV for this segment has been identified as being regionally important.

Scenery – Middle Main Sheep Creek is located within the Sheep Creek Canyon National Geological Area. Steep canyon walls, color variations in geologic features and formations, deciduous trees, riparian vegetation, and forested side slopes attract thousands of regional, national and international visitors to this segment. The Sheep Creek Cave located adjacent to the creek is also an attraction to many visitors.

Geologic/Hydrologic – Middle Main Sheep Creek has high-altered stream morphology due to flooding and debris flows. Flash flooding occurred in the 1960's from an ice jam that dammed water and then failed. In the 1980's, a large debris flow came out of Mahogany Draw, scoured the stream, and washed out the road in numerous places. The stream itself is relatively confined in a very steep canyon comprised of steep bedrock cliffs. Faulting has created some of the most spectacular bedrock exposures, and the area is part of the Sheep Creek National Geological Area. Big Spring within this segment contributes flows to the drainage, as is part of an underground karst system.

Wildlife – The Townsend's Big-Eared Bat is located in the Big Springs cave during winter months. Numerous other bat species utilize the canyon with a known variety of at least twelve species. The drainage is habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The drainage also provides habitat for Neotropical birds.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River – Recreational

Middle Main Sheep Creek is eligible for the Wild and Scenic River System. It is classified as recreational river.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – This segment is located entirely on the Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0-5.1	Ashley National Forest	1632

National Forest System lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values. Minimum lot

size is 40, 80, or 160 acres within these Multiple Use Districts. There are various permitted and conditional uses such as agriculture, forestry, mining, power generation and regulations related to residences. The Uniform Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for Daggett County are available at <http://www.Daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=8>.

More information on guidance related to land uses can be found in the Daggett County General Plan, available at <http://Daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=61>.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – There are no large past or currently active minerals or energy development activities, mining claims, or minerals leases located adjacent to this river segment (www.geocommunicator.gov). Based on the underlying geology, and lack of past minerals and energy development, little if any future mineral or energy extraction activities would be expected.

Water Resources Development – One bridge and one small diversion exist on this segment. Channel modifications after past flood events have included rip rap, channel stabilization, debris removal, and channel re-alignment. No potential water development projects are known at this time. The Utah State Water Plan for the Uintah Basin (which includes Daggett County), does not identify any proposed water development projects on this segment. There are no Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands along this segment.

Existing diversions in the upstream watershed (out of the eligible segment) include the Lodgepole canal, which diverts water from the North and Middle Forks of Sheep Creek into Lodgepole canyon. This diversion is not always used or active. The Main Fork of Sheep Creek is completely diverted into Long Park Reservoir via the Sheep Creek canal. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

There is one potential water development identified scoping comments from the Utah Div. of Water Resources. This site was studied in a report to the State Engineer, 1944. Hickerson Park (T02N R18E Section 19, Heights of 60 ft and 96 ft, with capacities of 4,000 ac-ft and 8,997 ac-ft respectively). Dam would be on Sheep Creek 6 miles above proposed W&S section. This proposed reservoir is located west of existing Long Park Reservoir and was investigated at the same time. The Long Park site was chosen over this site due to its larger capacity of 14,300 ac-ft. This reservoir could be useful if leaks reappear in Long Park Reservoir.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Sheep Creek/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway Loop (FDR 218) is located immediately adjacent to the creek for half of its length.

Grazing Activities – There are no permitted grazing allotments along this segment.

Recreation Activities – This segment receives moderate to heavy recreation use year round. Driving for pleasure, picnicking, hiking, fishing and hunting are the primary uses. Palisades Memorial Park day use area is a popular recreation destination. The segment is also part of a popular cross-country and snowmobiling route during winter months. The segment parallels the Sheep Creek Canyon/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway (FDR 218).

Other Resource Activities – This segment is within the Sheep Creek Geologic Area, in a narrow, confined canyon. Past timber harvest has not occurred and is not expected in the future. An historic Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) site exists near the creek. Due to deterioration and removal of some of the facilities, the site is not eligible for listing to the National Register. Evidence of prehistoric and Native American use of the area is unknown.

Special Designations – The Middle Main Sheep Creek segment is almost completely within the Sheep Creek National Geologic Area, which was designated to highlight and protect the unique geologic features of the area. This geologic area was named after the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep that inhabit the area, and is dominated by the Uinta Crest Fault, a section of folded and twisted rock that reveals

millions of years of geological history.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986) identifies the following management prescriptions for this area:

- (f) Dispersed Recreation Roaded. Areas receiving a variety of uses in a variety of landforms and vegetation types located throughout the Forest in a roaded environment. The riparian objective is to maintain. Control as needed to protect streambank stability, minimize sedimentation, prevent compaction and maintain visuals. This management prescription encompasses the lower reaches of the segment, downstream of Palisades Memorial Park day use area.
- (n) Range of resource uses and outputs. Commodity production modified for amenity production. Resource protection as needed outside of NRA. The riparian objective is to maintain and restore. This management prescription applies to the area upstream of the Palisades Memorial Park day use area.

The Sheep Creek/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway Loop (Forest Development Road 218) is parallel to the majority of this segment. Scenic Backways are paved or improved dirt roads that highlight some of the less visited, yet spectacular features of an area.

This segment is located within the Dutch John Drinking Water Source Protection Zone, as identified by the State of Utah.

There are inventoried roadless areas on both sides of this segment, from the Palisades Memorial Park area downstream to the Forest boundary.

Socio-Economic Environment – The two main communities in Daggett County are Manila and Dutch John, with populations of 685 and 204, respectively (2007 estimates). The county is set in a spectacular outdoor setting, where traditional land uses such as agriculture, timber harvest and livestock grazing have been important over time. The economy in Daggett County is based primarily on agriculture, livestock, hay, and alfalfa, but it is also an important producer of electric power for Utah and surrounding states. Dutch John originally provided a living place for those who worked at the Flaming Gorge dam.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Sheep Creek Geologic Area, Spirit Lake, the Green River and other outdoor attractions draw visitors to the area. Travel and tourism is an integral part of the local economy. The Flaming Gorge reservoir and the Green river are regional and national attractions. Both the reservoir and the Green River play an integral role in the local socio-economic environment. For example, there are 3 raft rental shops and 3 fly shops that cater to river enthusiasts on the Green River. 1.7 million dollars are brought into the area annually from customers of outfitter guides (13 total) on the Green River.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) The extent and determination of the degree to which the agency proposes or a State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river,

including the costs thereof, should it be proposed for inclusion in the System.

The State of Utah has not shown interest or disinterest in sharing the costs. Local county officials do not support Wild and Scenic designation for this segment, and would not share in the costs.

(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any conflicting local zoning and/or land use controls that could occur.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values.

Wild and Scenic designation would be inconsistent with the stated purposes of forestry, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Designation would be consistent with the protection of land and open space resources, wildlife habitat, avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, and danger from fires.

(3) Support or opposition to designation.

Comments received during the eligibility study

Daggett County officials and various members of the public were opposed to designation. Some reasons for opposition were potential effects to water rights, potential effects to reservoir and canal system management, potential effects to future water developments, and that other means of protection of outstandingly remarkable values are available.

The High Uintas Preservation Council, the Uinta Mountain Club, the Utah Rivers Council, and various members of the public were in support of designation. Some reasons in support of designation were the preservation of various outstandingly remarkable values, the prevention of further development or modification of river segments, and the protection of river segments within inventoried roadless areas.

Comments received during scoping for the suitability study

Two letters specifically mentioned Middle Main Sheep Creek. One supported designation based on its contribution to river system/basin integrity. The second letter was submitted by Sweetwater County Conservation District on behalf of Sweetwater County and Conservation District and Uinta County Conservation District in Wyoming. It stated that residents of those counties would be affected by designation of the Green River, raised questions about the study process, and requested cooperating agency status for all three entities.

Comments responding to the Draft EIS

Many letters commented that all segments within a single river system should be considered together, like Middle Main Sheep Creek and Lower Main Sheep Creek because they are ecologically connected and a joint recommendation would enhance their contribution to the river system's integrity.

- Existing protections are adequate even outside of Wilderness
- Special designations frequently have unintended consequences
- Widespread belief that existing water rights would be compromised
- Creation of a federal water right, even though junior, is a concern because all water is already allocated or over allocated. Federal right gets in the way of other water users who might need to get in line for the water.
- Preferred alternative has far too few rivers compared to number that are eligible
- Speculative or uncertain development needs should not outweigh other values

None of the organized letter writing campaigns recommended this river segment be found suitable for designation.

(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.

Designation would complement the existing direction in the Sheep Creek Geologic Area, inventoried roadless areas, and the Dutch John Drinking Water Protection Zones.

As discussed in suitability factor (2), designation may be both inconsistent and consistent with county zoning ordinances. The Daggett County General Plan does not specifically address Wild and Scenic River designation, but it does make the following statement about water resources:

“Adequate water quality and availability is necessary for significant residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and recreational development. Daggett County desires to protect and enhance the quality and quantity of usable water by promoting and expanding the efficient management and use of water resources. The County also feels that private water rights should be protected from encroachment and/or coerced acquisition.”

Further indication of the County’s position regarding Wild and Scenic River designation can be found in an amendment to their General Plan (responding to a BLM Wild and Scenic River study):

“It is Daggett County’s policy that no river segment should be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System unless:

- Water is present and flowing at all times.
- The water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of three physiographic provinces of the state, and that the rationale and justification for the conclusion are disclosed.
- BLM fully disclaims in writing any interest in water rights with respect to the subject segment.
- It is clearly demonstrated that including segment in the NWSR system will not prevent, reduce, impair, or otherwise interfere with the state and its citizen’s enjoyment of complete and exclusive water rights in and to rivers of the state as determined by the laws of the state, nor interfere with or impair local, state, regional, or interstate water compacts to which the State or Daggett County is a party.
- The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed.
- It is clearly demonstrated that BLM does not intend to use such a designation to improperly impose Class I or II Visual Resource Management prescriptions.
- It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed addition will not adversely impact the local economy agricultural and industrial operations, outdoor recreation, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment.

The foregoing also summarizes the wild and scenic river criteria of the State of Utah, Utah Code ' 63-38d-401(8)(a), as well as the criteria of Daggett County.”

(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.

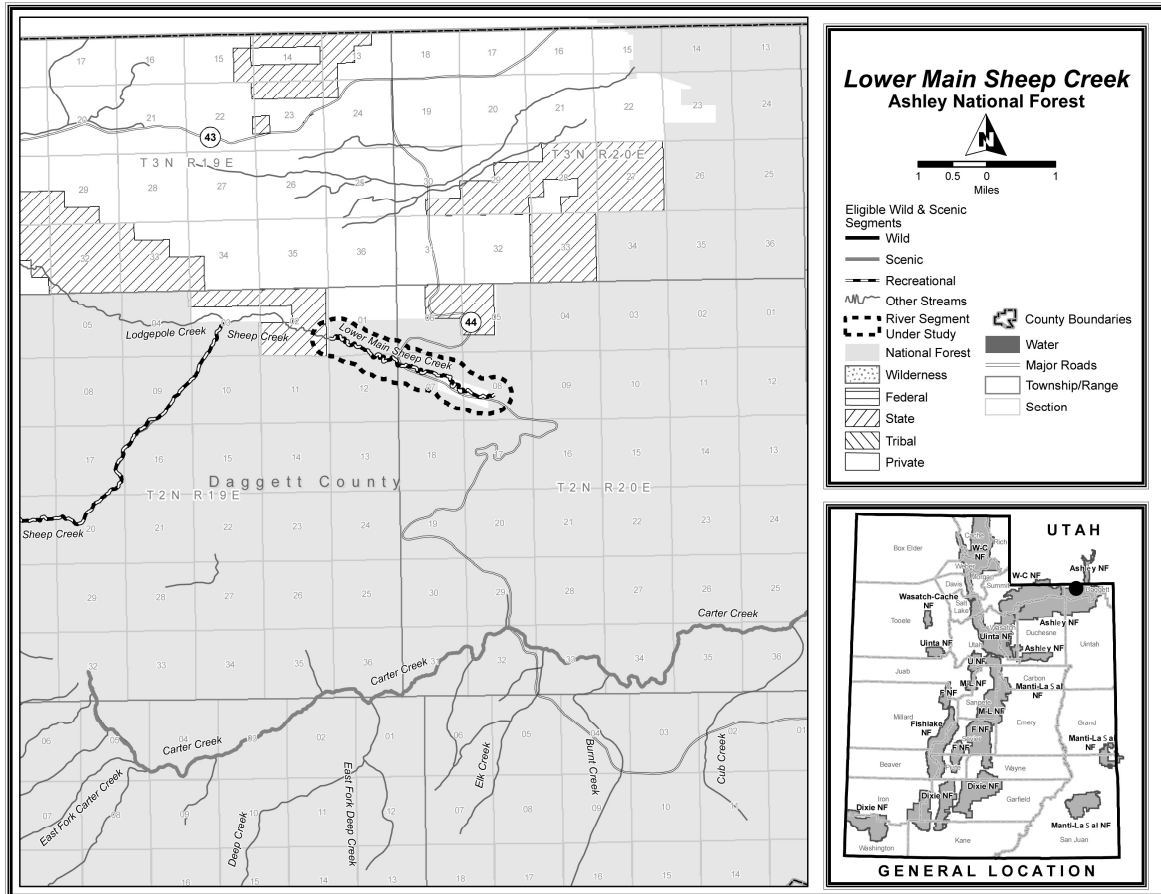
This eligible segment includes a small portion of the Sheep Creek basin, which decreases the ability to design a holistic protection strategy for the entire basin. Basin integrity could be improved by considering the Lower Main Sheep Creek and Middle Main Sheep Creek segments together. Designation would provide a comprehensive and holistic protection strategy with other cooperating agencies and public groups, for the segments that are proposed.

This entire segment is on National Forest System Lands, so the current proposal could not be expanded to other jurisdictions or ownerships

(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment

There has not been a demonstrated interest or disinterest in public volunteers, partnerships or stewardship commitments.

Lower Main Sheep Creek Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River Segment: Lower Main Sheep Creek

River Mileage:

Studied: 3.64 miles, from the common boundary of private land and the Ashley National Forest in the SW ¼ Section 1, T.2N. R.19E. to its confluence with Sheep Creek Bay, Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

Eligible: Same

Location:

Lower Main Sheep Creek	Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Daggett County, Utah		Congressional District 1	
	Start	End	Classification	Miles
Segment 1	SW ¼ SW ¼ Sect. 1, T 2 N, R 19 E, SLM	NE ¼ SW ¼ Sect. 8, T 2 N, R 20 E, SLM	Recreational	3.64

Physical Description of River Segment: The watercourse is located in a broad canyon with high sinuosity, less confinement, and large willow patches. The valley bottom is wider than all other segments in the Sheep Creek drainage, and has very steep canyon side slopes of exposed bedrock. Low gradient and

meandering is dominant in this segment. Lush riparian vegetation, cottonwoods and willows lines Lower Main Sheep Creek for most of its length.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, July 2005 (USDA Forest Service 2005)

Determination of Free-flowing Condition: Some existing impoundments. The existence of low dams, diversion, or other modifications of the watercourse, provided the watercourse remains free-flowing and generally natural and riverine in appearance. There are three road crossings with bridges and two small diversions. Flows are still considered free flowing.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values:

Recreational – Both the Sheep Creek Canyon/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway (FDR 218) and the Flaming Gorge National Scenic Byway (State Road 44) parallel portions of this segment. Campgrounds and nature trails are located adjacent to the creek and use is moderate to heavy from early June to late October. Recreation opportunities are camping, hiking, fishing, hunting and interpretive sites. The segment is well known for the Kokanee salmon spawning run during fall months and hundreds of visitors come to see the "run" during a three to four week period in September of each year. The segment on National Forest System lands is dedicated to recreation use and forest practices are designed to protect and preserve the existing values. Length of season was rated moderate. Diversity of use, experience quality, associated opportunities, attraction, and sites and facilities were rated high. Access and level of use were rated highly appropriate. Overall rating is high with a regional scale of importance.

Geologic/Hydrologic – The watercourse is located east of the Sheep Creek Canyon National Geological Area and exhibits many of the geologic features of the designated National Geological Area. Evidence of the changing geologic landscape, along with the animals that flourished and died there, is preserved in the rocks that form the spectacular scenery of the canyon area. The area showcases examples of deformation dominated by the classic faults and folds. There are spectacular views of geologic formations, fault lines, and ox bows and unusual drainage patterns along the stream course. The area contains most of the nine exposed formations that are found in adjacent National Geological Area, and these formations total nearly 8,000 feet of rock, representing more than 1 billion years of geologic history. The watercourse is located in a broad canyon with high sinuosity, less confinement, and large willow patches. The valley bottom is wider than all other segments in the Sheep Creek drainage, and has very steep canyon side slopes of exposed bedrock. Low gradient and meandering is dominant in this segment. Feature abundance and educational and scientific is rated high. Diversity of features is rated moderate. Overall rating is high with a national scale of importance.

Fish – This segment is the only significant Kokanee salmon spawning stream reach in eastern Utah and serves as spawn for reintroduction to other water bodies in the state. It is also a popular recreation fishing area and stocked with non-natives. Habitat quality, value of species, abundance of fish, natural reproduction were rated high. Diversity of species and size and vigor of fish were rated moderate. Overall Rating is high with a regional scale of importance.

Wildlife – This area has one of the highest diversity of neotropical-tropical migrants. The watercourse corridor is a critical wintering area for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and deer. Bats forage for insects in the watercourse. In addition, the area serves as habitat for bat roosting. Habitat Quality and Diversity of Species were rated high. Abundance of Species was rated low. Overall Rating is high with a regional scale of importance.

Other Similar Values – Lower Main of Sheep Creek has mixed narrow leaf cottonwood, blue spruce with

alder, birch, willow as a mid story with sedges, and grasses and forbs as a ground layer. The unit provides high structural diversity, which supports high numbers of species, including bird species. The watercourse is an important area for species migration and genetic interaction of both Kokanee salmon and Neotropical birds. Species diversity, ecological function, and educational and scientific were rated high. Rare communities and features were rated moderate. Overall rating is high with a regional scale of importance.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River Segment: Recreational

- Some existing impoundments. The existence of low dams, diversion, or other modifications of the watercourse, provided the watercourse remains free-flowing and generally natural and riverine in appearance.
- Some developments, substantial evidence of human activity.
- Readily accessible by road. Sheep Creek/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway Loop (Forest Development Road 218) and Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44) provide access the watercourse corridor.
- The existence of parallel roads on one or both banks as well as bridge crossings and other river access points.
- Water quality sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – This segment is located entirely on the Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, and is within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0-3.64	Ashley National Forest	1164.8

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values. Minimum lot size is 40, 80, or 160 acres within these Multiple Use Districts. There are various permitted and conditional uses such as agriculture, forestry, mining, power generation and regulations related to residences. The Uniform Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for Daggett County are available at <http://www.daggettcounty.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=8>.

More information on guidance related to land uses can be found in the Daggett County General Plan, available at <http://daggettcounty.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=61>.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – Although there are no large past or active minerals or energy development activities located adjacent to this river segment, there are large phosphate deposits located nearby, which could be developed and mined in the future. According to the BLM geocommunicator database (www.geocommunicator.gov), there are two authorized phosphate leases in the area. UTU-0-147257 is inside of the ½ mile river corridor in sections 7 and 8 of T 2 N., R 20 E. UTU-0-026255 is just outside of the ½ mile river corridor in sections 17 and 18 of T 2 N., R 20 E. Wild and Scenic designation could have an effect on these existing phosphate leases.

Water Resources Development – There are three road crossings with bridges and two small diversions. Some historic water diversion structures are present, which may be important from a cultural or historic

perspective. No potential water development projects are known at this time. The Utah State Water Plan for the Uintah Basin (which includes Daggett County), does not identify any proposed water development projects on this segment. There are no Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands along this segment.

Existing diversions in the upstream watershed (out of the eligible segment) include the Lodgepole canal, which diverts water from the North and Middle Forks of Sheep Creek into Lodgepole canyon. This diversion is not always used or active. The Main Fork of Sheep Creek is completely diverted into Long Park Reservoir via the Sheep Creek canal. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing valid water rights.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Sheep Creek/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway Loop (Forest Development Road 218) and Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44) provide access along the watercourse corridor.

Rights of way— There are two rights of way for roads across this segment. They are both in the name of the State of Utah.

Grazing Activities – There are no permitted grazing allotments along this segment.

Recreation Activities – Forest Service campground facilities and scenic byway interpretive sites and trails exist along within the corridor of the segment. This area provides an excellent opportunity to view Kokanee Salmon spawning in the fall.

Other Resource Activities – Timber harvest has not occurred along this segment and is not expected in the future.

Special Designations – This segment is entirely within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA). The legislation establishing this NRA specified three broad missions and management goals. Specifically, these are to administer, protect, and develop the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area in a manner to best provide for: (1) public outdoor recreation benefits, (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment, and (3) management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources that will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area was established.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986) identifies the following management prescriptions for this area:

- (r) Wildlife. This management area consists of those lands identified as having special or critical wildlife capabilities in the Flaming Gorge NRA. The objective is to maintain or increase wildlife species diversity and numbers while meeting the direction for protection of recreation and visual resources. The riparian objective is to protect. The management prescription applies to the south of this segment.
- (n₁) National Recreation Area – Existing Situation. These are lands in the NRA that have the existing low management prescription applied. Activities and practices recognize and emphasize the recreation and wildlife values within the NRA. Standards and guidelines are modified to comply with Public Law 90-540. The riparian objective is to protect. This management prescription encompasses the majority of the stream corridor, and areas to the north.

The Sheep Creek/Spirit Lake Scenic Backway Loop (Forest Development Road 218) provides access along the stream corridor. Scenic Backways are paved or improved dirt roads that highlight some of the less visited, yet spectacular features of an area.

The Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44) crosses the stream corridor.

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States (<http://www.byways.org/learn/>).

This segment is located within the Dutch John Drinking Water Source Protection Zone, as identified by the State of Utah.

Upstream of the Highway 44, Lower Main Sheep Creek is within an inventoried roadless area.

Socio-Economic Environment – The two main communities in Daggett County are Manila and Dutch John, with populations of 685 and 204, respectively (2007 estimates). The county is set in a spectacular outdoor setting, where traditional land uses such as agriculture, timber harvest and livestock grazing have been important over time. The economy in Daggett County is based primarily on agriculture, livestock, hay, and alfalfa, but it is also an important producer of electric power for Utah and surrounding states. Dutch John originally provided a living place for those who worked at the Flaming Gorge dam.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Sheep Creek Geologic Area, Spirit Lake, the Green River and other outdoor attractions draw visitors to the area. Travel and tourism is an integral part of the local economy. The Flaming Gorge reservoir and the Green river are regional and national attractions. Both the reservoir and the Green River play an integral role in the local socio-economic environment. For example, there are 3 raft rental shops and 3 fly shops that cater to river enthusiasts on the Green River. 1.7 million dollars are brought into the area annually from customers of outfitter guides (13 total) on the Green River.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT

(1) The extent and determination of the degree to which the agency proposes or a State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including the costs thereof, should it be proposed for inclusion in the System.

The State of Utah has not shown interest or disinterest in the designation of these segments. Local county officials do not support Wild and Scenic designation for this segment, and would not share in the costs.

(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any conflicting local zoning and/or land use controls that could occur.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion,

danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values.

Wild and Scenic designation would be inconsistent with the stated purposes of forestry, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Designation would be consistent with the protection of land and open space resources, wildlife habitat, avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, and danger from fires.

(3) Support or opposition to designation.

Comments received during the eligibility study:

Daggett County officials and various members of the public were opposed to designation. Some reasons for opposition were potential effects to water rights, potential effects to reservoir and canal system management, potential effects to future water developments, and that other means of protection of outstandingly remarkable values are available.

The High Uintas Preservation Council, the Uinta Mountain Club, the Utah Rivers Council, and various members of the public were in support of designation. Some reasons in support of designation were the preservation of various outstandingly remarkable values, the prevention of further development or modification of river segments, and the protection of river segments within inventoried roadless areas.

Comments received during scoping for the suitability study:

Two letters specifically mentioned Lower Main Sheep Creek. One expressed support for designation based on its contribution to river system/basin integrity. The second letter was submitted by Sweetwater County Conservation District on behalf of Sweetwater County and Conservation District and Uinta County Conservation District in Wyoming. It stated that residents of those counties would be affected by designation of the Green River, raised questions about the study process, and requested cooperating agency status for all three entities.

Comments responding to Draft EIS

Many letters commented that all segments within a single river system should be considered together, like Middle Main Sheep Creek and Lower Main Sheep Creek because they are ecologically connected and a joint recommendation would enhance their contribution to the river system's integrity.

- Existing protections are adequate even outside of Wilderness
- Special designations frequently have unintended consequences
- Widespread belief that existing water rights would be compromised
- Creation of a federal water right, even though junior, is a concern because all water is already allocated or over allocated. Federal right gets in the way of other water users who might need to get in line for the water.
- Preferred alternative has far too few rivers compared to number that are eligible
- Speculative or uncertain development needs should not outweigh other values

Of the three organized campaign responses none supported a positive suitability finding for this segment.

(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.

Designation would complement the existing direction in the NRA, inventoried roadless areas, and the Dutch John Drinking Water Protection Zone.

Designation would also be consistent with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources emphasis on maintaining high quality wildlife for bighorn sheep and fisheries habitat for trout and kokanee salmon.

As discussed in suitability factor (2), designation may be both inconsistent and consistent with county zoning ordinances. The Daggett County General Plan does not specifically address Wild and Scenic River designation, but it does make the following statement about water resources:

“Adequate water quality and availability is necessary for significant residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and recreational development. Daggett County desires to protect and enhance the quality and quantity of usable water by promoting and expanding the efficient management and use of water resources. The County also feels that private water rights should be protected from encroachment and/or coerced acquisition.”

Further indication of the County’s position regarding Wild and Scenic River designation can be found in an amendment to their General Plan (responding to a BLM Wild and Scenic River study):

“It is Daggett County’s policy that no river segment should be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System unless:

- Water is present and flowing at all times.
- The water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of three physiographic provinces of the state, and that the rationale and justification for the conclusion are disclosed.
- BLM fully disclaims in writing any interest in water rights with respect to the subject segment.
- It is clearly demonstrated that including segment in the NWSR system will not prevent, reduce, impair, or otherwise interfere with the state and its citizen’s enjoyment of complete and exclusive water rights in and to rivers of the state as determined by the laws of the state, nor interfere with or impair local, state, regional, or interstate water compacts to which the State or Daggett County is a party.
- The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed.
- It is clearly demonstrated that BLM does not intend to use such a designation to improperly impose Class I or II Visual Resource Management prescriptions.
- It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed addition will not adversely impact the local economy agricultural and industrial operations, outdoor recreation, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment.

The foregoing also summarizes the wild and scenic river criteria of the State of Utah, Utah Code ' 63-38d-401(8)(a), as well as the criteria of Daggett County.”

(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.

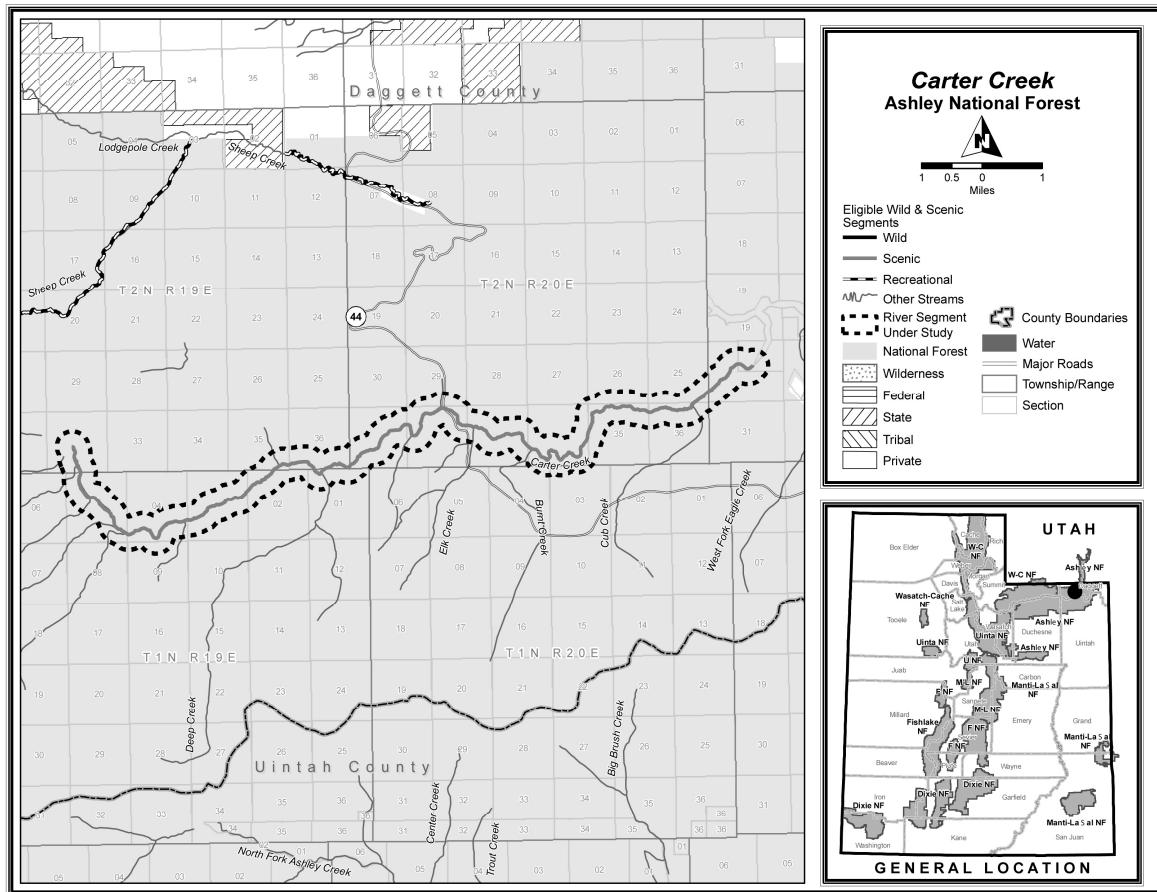
This eligible segment includes a small portion of the Sheep Creek basin, which decreases the ability to design a holistic protection strategy for the entire basin. Basin integrity could be improved by considering the Lower Main Sheep Creek and Middle Main Sheep Creek segments together. Designation would provide a comprehensive and holistic protection strategy with other cooperating agencies and public groups, for the segments that are proposed.

This entire segment is on National Forest System Lands, so the current proposal could not be expanded to other jurisdictions or ownerships.

(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.

There has not been a demonstrated interest or disinterest in public volunteers, partnerships or stewardship commitments.

Carter Creek Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Carter Creek

River Mileage:

Studied: 15.89 miles, from the Browne Lake dam to the point of entry into Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

Eligible: Same

Location:

Carter Creek	Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Daggett County, Utah		Congressional District UT-2	
	Start (TRS)	End (TRS)	Classification	Miles
Segment 1	NE ¼ SW ¼ Sect. 32, T 2 N, R 19 E, SLM	SW ¼ NE ¼ Sect. 30, T 2 N, R 21 E, SLM	Scenic	15.89

Physical Description of River Segment:

The upper creek areas run through small meadows. Carter Creek then enters a shallow canyon area with lush riparian vegetation along the stream banks and mixed conifer, aspen and sagebrush on adjacent side slopes. From the crossing at Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44) to the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, Carter Creek is located in a steep canyon, lined with rock outcrops and

cliffs. Steep Canyon side slopes of exposed Uinta Mountain group keep this segment relatively confined. Steep gradients, debris jams, large boulders, and very rugged topography characterize this segment. This segment is very stable and not subject to bank destabilization.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, July 2005 (USDA Forest Service 2005)

Determination of Free-flowing Condition: Water quality sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values. The two bridge crossings on Carter Creek do not reduce or adversely affect natural flows. No diversions exist on either segment.

Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV):

Historic – The historic Carter Military Pass Road crosses through the upper portion of the segment. Some bedrock road cuts are evident. The upper portion of the drainage is also a significant historic district for work and facilities accomplished by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Cultural – Archaic, Fremont and late prehistoric sites exist within the corridor. Some of these sites are eligible for listing to the National Register. The Carter Creek granary at the mouth of the creek is a significant archaeological site. There are also significant rock shelters and storage features within the upper, middle and lower canyon areas of Carter Creek.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River Segment: Scenic

- Free of impoundments.
- Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial evidence of human activity.
- Accessible in places by roads.
- Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads. The historic Carter Military Pass Road also crosses through the upper portion of the segment. Some bedrock road cuts are evident. Evidence of roads and rock retaining walls constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps exist in the upper and portion of the segment. Portions of the roads and retaining walls still serve and are part of the existing road access in the corridor of the creek. Two road bridge crossings exist, one in the upper half of the segment (Forest Development Road 539) and the other at the crossing of the Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44).
- Water quality sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – This segment is located entirely on the Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, and is within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0-15.89	Ashley National Forest	5084.8

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion,

danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values. Minimum lot size is either 40, 80, or 160 acres within these Multiple Use Districts. There are various permitted and conditional uses such as agriculture, forestry, mining, power generation and regulations related to residences. The Uniform Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for Daggett County are available at <http://www.daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=8>.

More information on guidance related to land uses can be found in the Daggett County General Plan, available at <http://daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=61>.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – There are no large past or currently active minerals or energy development activities, mining claims, or minerals leases located adjacent to this river segment (www.geocommunicator.gov). Based on the underlying geology, and lack of past minerals and energy development, little if any future mineral or energy extraction activities would be expected.

Water Resources Development – There are no dams or diversions within the eligible corridor, but there are water developments in the upstream area that have an influence on flows in Carter Creek. Sheep Creek Canal diverts the entire flow of several tributaries to Carter Creek, including East Fork, Middle Fork, West Fork, Weyman Creek, South Fork Beaver Creek, and Beaver Creek. Flows from these tributaries are diverted out of the Carter Creek drainage and into Long Park Reservoir. A canal maintained by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources diverts flows out of South Fork Beaver Creek and Beaver Creek into Sheep Creek Lake, which is maintained as a flow through reservoir for Colorado Cutthroat brood stock. Browne Lake Reservoir is just upstream of the eligible segment and is also operated by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources as a flow through reservoir, so it does not have an effect on downstream flows. Wild and Scenic designation is not expected to have an adverse effect on these existing diversion and storage developments.

There are Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands associated with the Flaming Gorge reservoir that extend from the confluence with the reservoir upstream for approximately 1 mile (Section 30 T N 2, R 21 E SLM).

There are two bridge crossings (forest road 539 and Highway 44) within the eligible segment, but they do not reduce or adversely affect natural flows. No future or potential water developments within the eligible river corridor are known at this time. The Utah State Water Plan for the Uintah Basin (which includes Daggett County), does not identify any proposed water development projects on this segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Two road bridge crossings exist, one in the upper half of the segment (Forest Development Road 539) and the other at the crossing of the Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44). Parking areas exist at both these crossings. The Lost Springs Trail (007) parallels the upper half of the creek, while steep canyon east of State Highway 44 is relatively inaccessible. One trail access point (Carter Creek Trail) exists in this canyon area near Meadow Park. The Carter Creek Trail connects lower Carter Creek with the popular Hideout Canyon Boat Camp on the Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

The historic Carter Military Pass Road also crosses through the upper portion of the segment. Some bedrock road cuts are evident. There are also the remnants of an historic cabin and ditch at Young Springs.

Grazing Activities – The Lonesome Park allotment is downstream of Highway 44, but due to the rugged nature of the canyon, there is no grazing use along the river corridor. The Sheep Creek Mountain allotment is upstream of Highway 44, which permits 173 cow/calf pairs from June 20 – September 15. Grazing in this area occurs between the Deep Creek confluence to within ¼ mile of Browne Reservoir.

An enclosure has been in place for 12 years along the meadow segment below Browne Reservoir.

Recreation Activities – Fishing and hiking are the major uses along the creek. Deep Creek Campground is located next to the creek at the crossing of Forest Development Road 539, and is a favorite campground of local residents. The terminus of the creek in Flaming Gorge Reservoir is a very popular fishing spot for boaters on the reservoir.

Other Resource Activities – Past timber harvest has occurred in the upper portions of this watershed. There is a potential for future timber harvest, but it would not be expected along the river corridor.

Special Designations – The lower half of this segment (from the confluence with Flaming Gorge reservoir to one mile upstream of the Highway 44 crossing) is within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA). The legislation establishing this NRA specified three broad missions and management goals. Specifically, these are to administer, protect, and develop the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area in a manner to best provide for: (1) public outdoor recreation benefits, (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment, and (3) management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources that will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area was established.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986) identifies the following management prescriptions for this area:

- (n) Range of resource uses and outputs. Commodity production modified for amenity production. Resource protection as needed outside of NRA. The riparian objective is to maintain and restore. This management prescription applies to the majority of the upper half of this segment.
- (f) Dispersed Recreation Roaded. Areas receiving a variety of uses in a variety of landforms and vegetation types located throughout the Forest in a roaded environment. The riparian objective is to maintain. Control as needed to protect streambank stability, minimize sedimentation, prevent compaction and maintain visuals. This management prescription encompasses a small portion of the stream corridor about 1 mile downstream of Browne reservoir.
- (b) Moderate Timber Production. This prescription only applies to a small sliver (approximately 100 yards) that is within the ½ mile river corridor near the crossing of Forest Development Road 539.
- (r) Wildlife. This management area consists of those lands identified as having special or critical wildlife capabilities in the Flaming Gorge NRA. The objective is to maintain or increase wildlife species diversity and numbers while meeting the direction for protection of recreation and visual resources. The riparian objective is to protect. The management prescription applies to the segment for one mile upstream of the Highway 44 crossing.
- (n₁) National Recreation Area – Existing Situation. These are lands in the NRA that have the existing low management prescription applied. Activities and practices recognize and emphasize the recreation and wildlife values within the NRA. Standards and guidelines are modified to comply with Public Law 90-540. The riparian objective is to protect. This management prescription encompasses the lower half of this segment, downstream of the Highway 44 crossing.

The Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 44) crosses the stream corridor. The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States (<http://www.byways.org/learn/>).

This segment is located within the Dutch John Drinking Water Source Protection Zone, as identified by the State of Utah.

The portions of this segment between Browne reservoir and Forest Road 539, and downstream of Highway 44 are within inventoried roadless areas.

Socio-Economic Environment – The two main communities in Daggett County are Manila and Dutch John, with populations of 685 and 204, respectively (2007 estimates). The county is set in a spectacular outdoor setting, where traditional land uses such as agriculture, timber harvest and livestock grazing have been important over time. The economy in Daggett County is based primarily on agriculture, livestock, hay, and alfalfa, but it is also an important producer of electric power for Utah and surrounding states. Dutch John originally provided a living place for those who worked at the Flaming Gorge dam.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Sheep Creek Geologic Area, Spirit Lake, the Green River and other outdoor attractions draw visitors to the area. Travel and tourism is an integral part of the local economy. The Flaming Gorge reservoir and the Green river are regional and national attractions. Both the reservoir and the Green River play an integral role in the local socio-economic environment. For example, there are 3 raft rental shops and 3 fly shops that cater to river enthusiasts on the Green River. 1.7 million dollars are brought into the area annually from customers of outfitter guides (13 total) on the Green River.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) The extent and determination of the degree to which the agency proposes or a State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including the costs thereof, should it be proposed for inclusion in the System.

The State of Utah has not shown interest or disinterest in sharing the costs. Local county officials do not support Wild and Scenic designation for this segment, and would not share in the costs.

(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any conflicting local zoning and/or land use controls that could occur.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values.

Wild and Scenic designation could be inconsistent with the stated purposes of forestry, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Designation would be consistent with the protection of land and open space resources, wildlife habitat, avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, and danger from fires.

(3) Support or opposition to designation.

Comments received during the eligibility study:

Daggett County officials and various members of the public were opposed to designation. Some reasons for opposition were potential effects to water rights, potential effects to reservoir and canal system management, potential effects to future water developments, and that other means of protection of outstandingly remarkable values are available.

The High Uintas Preservation Council, the Uinta Mountain Club, the Utah Rivers Council, and various members of the public were in support of designation. Some reasons in support of designation were the preservation of various outstandingly remarkable values, the prevention of further development or modification of river segments, and the protection of river segments within inventoried roadless areas.

Comments received during scoping for the suitability study:

Two scoping letters specifically mentioned Carter Creek: one supported designation based on “remarkable values” and lack of suitability conflicts; the other stated that residents of Sweetwater and Uinta Counties in Wyoming were affected by management of Carter Creek, raised questions about the study process, and requested cooperating agency status for those Counties and Conservation Districts.

Comments received responding to the Draft EIS

Of the three organized campaign responses none supported a positive suitability finding for this segment.

(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.

Designation would complement the existing direction in the NRA, inventoried roadless areas, and the Dutch John Drinking Water Protection Zone.

Designation would also be consistent with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources emphasis on maintaining high quality wildlife and fisheries habitat. Designation would complement the ongoing efforts to maintain Colorado Cutthroat trout brood stock in Sheep Creek Lake (upstream of this segment)

As discussed in suitability factor (2), designation may be both inconsistent and consistent with county zoning ordinances. The Daggett County General Plan does not specifically address Wild and Scenic River designation, but it does make the following statement about water resources:

“Adequate water quality and availability is necessary for significant residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and recreational development. Daggett County desires to protect and enhance the quality and quantity of usable water by promoting and expanding the efficient management and use of water resources. The County also feels that private water rights should be protected from encroachment and/or coerced acquisition.”

Further indication of the County’s position regarding Wild and Scenic River designation can be found in an amendment to their General Plan (responding to a BLM Wild and Scenic River study):

“It is Daggett County’s policy that no river segment should be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System unless:

- Water is present and flowing at all times.
- The water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of three physiographic provinces of the state, and that the rationale and justification for the conclusion are disclosed.
- BLM fully disclaims in writing any interest in water rights with respect to the subject segment.
- It is clearly demonstrated that including segment in the NWSR system will not prevent, reduce, impair, or otherwise interfere with the state and its citizen’s

enjoyment of complete and exclusive water rights in and to rivers of the state as determined by the laws of the state, nor interfere with or impair local, state, regional, or interstate water compacts to which the State or Daggett County is a party.

- The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed.
- It is clearly demonstrated that BLM does not intend to use such a designation to improperly impose Class I or II Visual Resource Management prescriptions.
- It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed addition will not adversely impact the local economy agricultural and industrial operations, outdoor recreation, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment.

The foregoing also summarizes the wild and scenic river criteria of the State of Utah, Utah Code ' 63-38d-401(8)(a), as well as the criteria of Daggett County.”

(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.

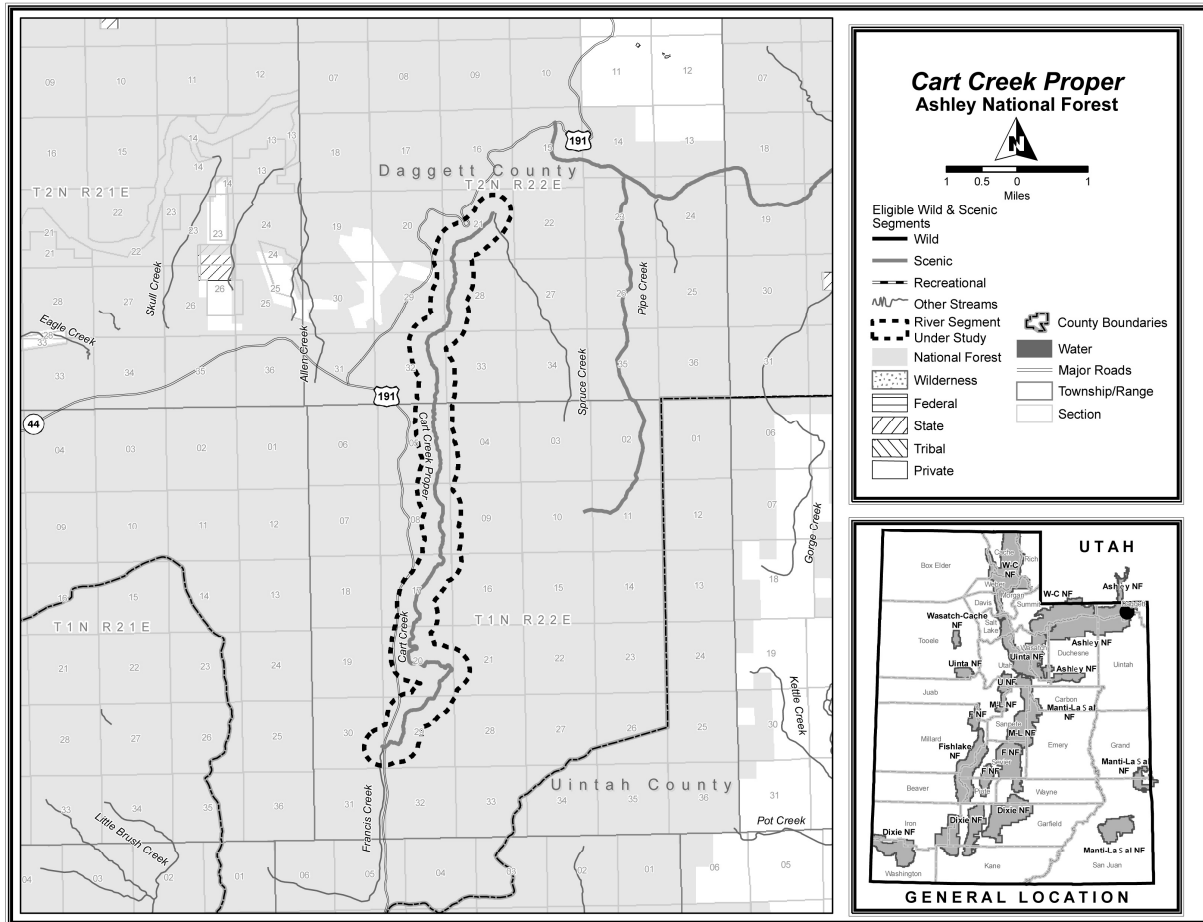
A large portion the Carter Creek headwaters were not found eligible for designation, which decreases the ability to design a holistic protection strategy for the entire basin. For the segment that is proposed, designation would provide a comprehensive and holistic protection strategy with other cooperating agencies and public groups.

This entire segment is on National Forest System Lands, so the current proposal could not be expanded to other jurisdictions or ownerships.

(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.

There has not been a demonstrated interest or disinterest in public volunteers, partnerships or stewardship commitments.

Cart Creek Proper Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Cart Creek Proper

River Mileage:

Studied: 10.19 miles, from the confluence of Francis and Cart Creeks, just upstream of State Highway 191 to the point of entry into Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

Eligible: Same

Location:

Cart Creek Proper	Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Daggett County, Utah		Congressional District 1	
	Start (TRS)	End (TRS)	Classification	Miles
Segment 1	SW ¼ SW ¼ Sect. 30, T 1 N, R 22 E, SLM	SW ¼ NE ¼ Sect. 21, T 2 N, R 22 E, SLM	Scenic	10.19

Physical Description of River Segment:

Cart Creek Proper descends from a meadow environment through a shallow then deeply incised canyon to an eventual terminus point at Flaming Gorge Reservoir. The canyon topography is rugged with mixed

coniferous vegetation on the slopes, interspersed with several talus slopes and rock outcrops. A diverse ribbon of riparian vegetation exists along the stream corridor. The Creek is confined in a steep canyon on the Uinta Mountain Group with a high complexity of pools, boulders, and debris jams. Flooding is common, but the stream itself is very resistant to bank erosion.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, July 2005 (USDA Forest Service 2005)

Determination of Free-flowing Condition: Water quality sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values. The road crossing does not impair flows and there are no diversions.

Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Values:

Cultural – Archaic, Fremont and late prehistoric sites (granary and rock shelters) have been located near the creek. The sites are in good condition and eligible for listing to the National Register. Significance, Number of Cultures, Education/Interpretation, and Listing/Eligibility were rated high. Current Uses was rated low. Site Integrity was rated moderate. Overall Rating is high with a regional Scale of Importance.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River Segment: Scenic

- Free of impoundments.
- Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial evidence of human activity.
- Evidence of past logging or ongoing timber harvest, provided the forest appears natural from the riverbank.
- Accessible in places by roads. The Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway and Forest Development Road 049 cross the upper end of the segment. From that point on, steep canyon terrain prohibits vehicle and trail access.
- Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads.
- Water quality sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – This segment is located entirely on the Ashley National Forest, beginning on the Vernal Ranger District and ending on the Flaming Gorge Ranger District (within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area).

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0-10.19	Ashley National Forest	3260.8

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values. Minimum lot size is either 40, 80, or 160 acres within these Multiple Use Districts. There are various permitted and conditional uses such as agriculture, forestry, mining, power generation and regulations related to residences. The Uniform Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for Daggett County are available at <http://www.daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=8>.

More information on guidance related to land uses can be found in the Daggett County General Plan, available at <http://daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=61>.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – There are no large past or currently active minerals or energy development activities, mining claims, or minerals leases located adjacent to this river segment (www.geocommunicator.gov). Based on the underlying geology, and lack of past minerals and energy development, little if any future mineral or energy extraction activities would be expected.

Water Resources Development – There are no existing water developments (dams, diversions or channel modifications) on this segment. No future or potential water developments within the river corridor are known at this time. The Utah State Water Plan for the Uintah Basin (which includes Daggett County), does not identify any proposed water development projects on this segment. There are Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands associated with the Flaming Gorge reservoir that extend from the confluence with the reservoir approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – The Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 191) and Forest Development Road 049 cross the upper end of the segment. From that point on, steep canyon terrain prohibits vehicle and trail access. Lodgepole Campground is located within several hundred feet of the upper end of the segment.

Grazing Activities – Cart Creek creates a boundary between grazing allotments, but due to the rugged topography and limited access, no grazing use occurs in the river corridor. The McKee Draw sheep allotment on the Vernal Ranger District is in the headwaters of Cart Creek, but it has been vacant for four years, and use is not expected in the future.

Recreation Activities – Most recreation use occurs in the upper portion of the segment and is associated with fishing, developed and dispersed camping, hiking, and hunting. Some cross-country skiing and snowmobiling also occurs in the upper segment area during winter months.

Other Resource Activities – No timber harvest has occurred along the river corridor, but past harvest has occurred in the upper watershed and could potentially occur in the future. Recent salvage logging activities are evident on the lower slopes of the surrounding mountains.

Special Designations – The lower 2.1 miles of this segment are within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA). The legislation establishing this area specified three broad missions and management goals. Specifically, these are to administer, protect, and develop the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area in a manner to best provide for: (1) public outdoor recreation benefits, (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment, and (3) management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources that will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area was established.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986) identifies the following management prescriptions for this area:

- (n) Range of resource uses and outputs. Commodity production modified for amenity production. Resource protection as needed outside of NRA. The riparian objective is to maintain and restore. This management prescription applies to the majority of the segment outside of the NRA.
- (f) Dispersed Recreation Road. Areas receiving a variety of uses in a variety of landforms and vegetation types located throughout the Forest in a roaded environment. The riparian objective is to maintain. Control as needed to protect streambank stability, minimize sedimentation, prevent compaction and maintain visuals. This management prescription applies to some scattered areas

outside of the NRA.

- (n₁) National Recreation Area – Existing Situation. These are lands in the NRA that have the existing low management prescription applied. Activities and practices recognize and emphasize the recreation and wildlife values within the NRA. Standards and guidelines are modified to comply with Public Law 90-540. The riparian objective is to protect. This management prescription encompasses the majority of the area within the NRA.
- (r) Wildlife. This management area consists of those lands identified as having special or critical wildlife capabilities in the Flaming Gorge NRA. The objective is to maintain or increase wildlife species diversity and numbers while meeting the direction for protection of recreation and visual resources. The riparian objective is to protect. The management prescription applies to a small area near the confluence with Flaming Gorge reservoir.

The Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (Utah State Highway 191) crosses the stream corridor at the beginning of this segment. The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States (<http://www.byways.org/learn/>).

This segment is located within the Dutch John Drinking Water Source Protection Zone, as identified by the State of Utah.

Almost the entire length of this segment downstream of the Highway 191 crossing is within inventoried roadless areas.

Socio-Economic Environment – The two main communities in Daggett County are Manila and Dutch John, with populations of 685 and 204, respectively (2007 estimates). The county is set in a spectacular outdoor setting, where traditional land uses such as agriculture, timber harvest and livestock grazing have been important over time. The economy in Daggett County is based primarily on agriculture, livestock, hay, and alfalfa, but it is also an important producer of electric power for Utah and surrounding states. Dutch John originally provided a living place for those who worked at the Flaming Gorge dam.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Sheep Creek Geologic Area, Spirit Lake, the Green River and other outdoor attractions draw visitors to the area. Travel and tourism is an integral part of the local economy. The Flaming Gorge reservoir and the Green river are regional and national attractions. Both the reservoir and the Green River play an integral role in the local socio-economic environment. For example, there are 3 raft rental shops and 3 fly shops that cater to river enthusiasts on the Green River. 1.7 million dollars are brought into the area annually from customers of outfitter guides (13 total) on the Green River.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) The extent and determination of the degree to which the agency proposes or a State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including the costs thereof, should it be proposed for inclusion in the System.

The State of Utah has not shown interest or disinterest in sharing the costs. Local county officials do not support Wild and Scenic designation for this segment, and would not share in the costs.

(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any conflicting local zoning and/or land use controls that could occur.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values.

Wild and Scenic designation would be inconsistent with the stated purposes of forestry, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Designation would be consistent with the protection of land and open space resources, wildlife habitat, avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, and danger from fires.

(3) Support or opposition to designation.

Comments received during the eligibility study:

Daggett County officials and various members of the public were opposed to designation. Some reasons for opposition were potential effects to water rights, potential effects to reservoir and canal system management, potential effects to future water developments, and that other means of protection of outstandingly remarkable values are available.

The High Uintas Preservation Council, the Uinta Mountain Club, the Utah Rivers Council, and various members of the public were in support of designation. Some reasons in support of designation were the preservation of various outstandingly remarkable values, the prevention of further development or modification of river segments, and the protection of river segments within inventoried roadless areas.

Comments received during scoping for the suitability study:

Two scoping letters specifically mentioned Cart Creek: one expressed support for designation based on "remarkable values" and lack of suitability conflicts; the other stated that residents of Sweetwater and Uinta Counties in Wyoming were affected by management of Cart Creek, raised questions about the study process, and requested cooperating agency status for those Counties and Conservation Districts.

Comments received in response to the draft EIS

Of the three organized campaign responses none supported a positive suitability finding for this segment.

(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.

Designation would complement the existing direction in the NRA, inventoried roadless areas, and the Dutch John Drinking Water Protection Zone.

As discussed in suitability factor (2), designation may be both inconsistent and consistent with county zoning ordinances. The Daggett County General Plan does not specifically address Wild and Scenic River designation, but it does make the following statement about water resources:

“Adequate water quality and availability is necessary for significant residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and recreational development. Daggett County desires to protect and enhance the quality and quantity of usable water by promoting and expanding the efficient management and use of water resources. The County also feels that private water rights should be protected from encroachment and/or coerced acquisition.”

Further indication of the County’s position regarding Wild and Scenic River designation can be found in an amendment to their General Plan (responding to a BLM Wild and Scenic River study):

“It is Daggett County’s policy that no river segment should be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System unless:

- Water is present and flowing at all times.
- The water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of three physiographic provinces of the state, and that the rationale and justification for the conclusion are disclosed.
- BLM fully disclaims in writing any interest in water rights with respect to the subject segment.
- It is clearly demonstrated that including segment in the NWSR system will not prevent, reduce, impair, or otherwise interfere with the state and its citizen’s enjoyment of complete and exclusive water rights in and to rivers of the state as determined by the laws of the state, nor interfere with or impair local, state, regional, or interstate water compacts to which the State or Daggett County is a party.
- The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed.
- It is clearly demonstrated that BLM does not intend to use such a designation to improperly impose Class I or II Visual Resource Management prescriptions.
- It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed addition will not adversely impact the local economy agricultural and industrial operations, outdoor recreation, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment.

The foregoing also summarizes the wild and scenic river criteria of the State of Utah, Utah Code ' 63-38d-401(8)(a), as well as the criteria of Daggett County.”

(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.

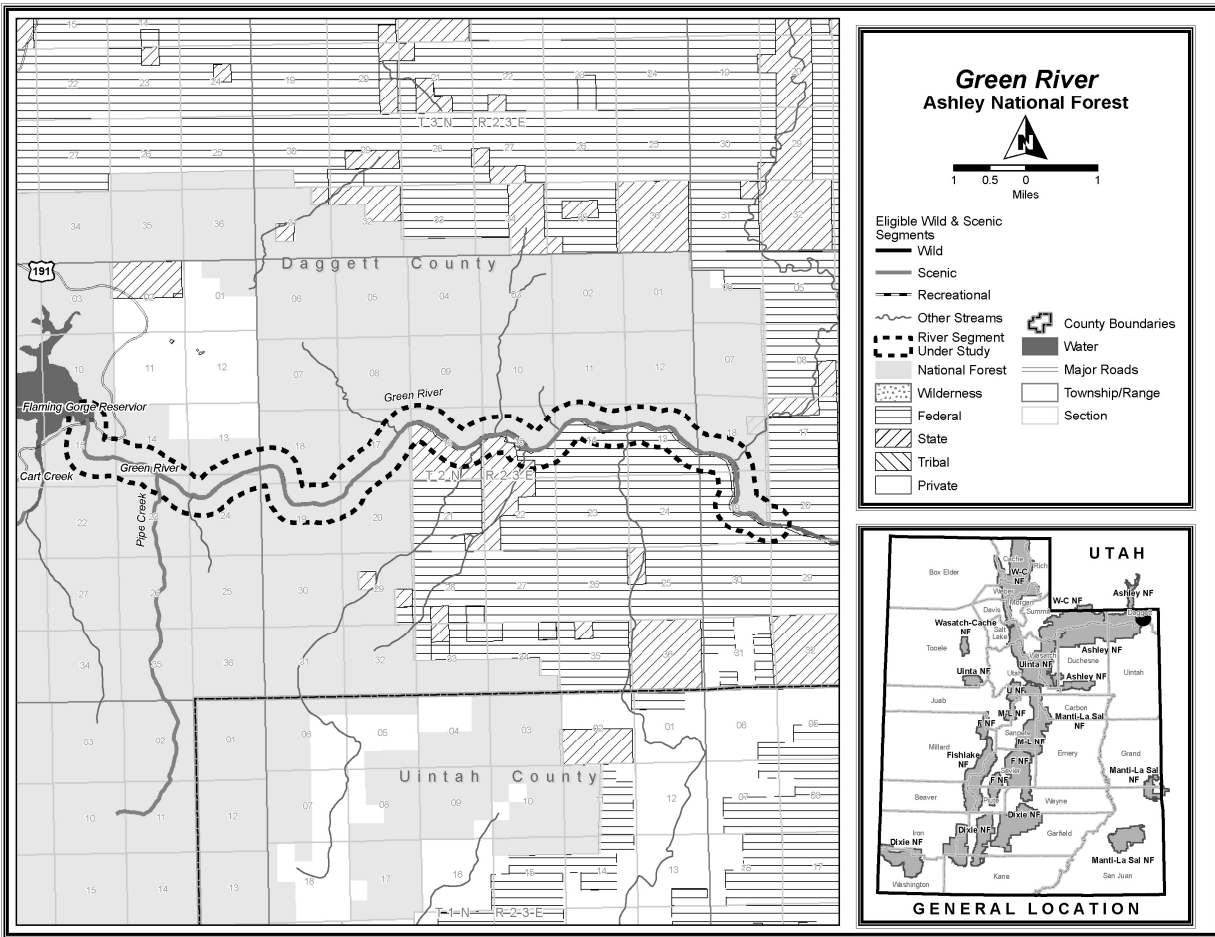
Designation would provide a comprehensive and holistic protection strategy with other cooperating agencies and public groups, for the segment that is proposed. Basin integrity could be improved by including the headwaters of Cart Creek, including Francis Creek, but these areas were not found eligible for designation.

This entire segment is on National Forest System Lands, so the current proposal could not be expanded to other jurisdictions or ownerships.

(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.

There has not been a demonstrated interest or disinterest for public volunteers, partnerships or stewardship commitments.

Green River Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Green River

River Mileage:

Studied: 12.60 miles, from the Flaming Gorge Dam outlet works to the boundary of the Ashley National Forest.

Eligible: Same

Location:

Green River	Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Daggett County, Utah		Congressional District UT -2	
	Start (TRS)	End (TRS)	Classification	Miles
Segment 1	NW ¼ NE ¼ Sect. 15, T 2 N, R 22 E, SLM	SE ¼ SE ¼ Sect 19, T 2 N, R 24 E, SLM	Scenic	12.60

Physical Description of River Segment:

This segment flows through a deep, narrow canyon. Slope gradient is from 45 to 80 percent, with many sheer cliffs. There are occasional steep breaks along the river and small side drainages. Most of the total

stream flow is provided by runoff of melting snow in the high mountains of the Uinta Range in northeastern Utah and the Wyoming and Wind River Ranges of west central Wyoming. Flows are now controlled by operations of the Flaming Gorge Dam and Reservoir. Pre-dam peak flows were typically 10,000 to 20,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), while base flows were typically 800 to 1,000 cfs. Typical flows in the segment below Flaming Gorge Dam between the mid-1960's and the early 1990's during the base flow period were 2,000 to 3,000 cfs. From 1992 to present, the dam has been operated to meet the requirement of the four endangered fish in the river segments beyond the National Forest boundary. This is being done by releasing peak flows that more closely resemble pre-dam conditions.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, July 2005 (USDA Forest Service 2005)

Determination of Free-flowing Condition: The segment begins immediately below Flaming Gorge Dam. There are no diversions or significant channel modifications from the outlet works of the dam to the National Forest/Flaming Gorge National Recreation boundary.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values:

Scenic – The Green River provides a unique up close and background view of steep and colorful cliffs that are intersected by slopes of various steepness and texture. The cliffs are either up close at the waters edge or off in the distance above the immediate river gorge. These views are contrasted with the view of Flaming Gorge Dam from below at the beginning of this river segment. The foreground view of the river is one of differing riparian vegetation at the water's edge that contrasts with more xeric vegetation as you move up the slopes along the river.

The crystal clear water of the river provides a dramatic contrast to the red canyon walls and cliffs especially when the canyon straightens and the river can be viewed for an extended distance. Rock outcrops along the inner canyon rim seem to extend out over the river. The views of calm sections of the river are interrupted by the appearance of a disappearing river as one floats closer to a rapid and its drop in elevation. Large boulders in the river are also a special feature of the river.

Cottonwoods and willows, along with other riparian vegetation, provide a change in the scenery as the seasons change. The contrast between winter snow, the clear bluish water, and the red cliffs is striking. Fall colors of cottonwoods, willows, aspen higher up on the slopes, and Ponderosa pine along the river contribute to dramatic scenery in the fall. Steep, vertical sandstone spires, escarpments of 400-800 feet (Organ Rock formation), deep gorges, and flat, narrow valley bottoms characterize this watercourse. Erosion has produced highly scenic rock outcrops and alcoves along the canyon walls. Views are expansive and unobstructed within the canyon.

The Flaming Gorge Dam and the Little Hole National Recreation Trail (sections of natural trail with sections of boardwalks extending out into the river) add to the dramatic scenery of the Green River. The dam and its related power generation structures provide a unique visual experience. On rare occasions when jet tube water releases from Flaming Gorge Dam occur, the experience is world class. Diversity of View and Special Features were rated high. Seasonal Variations was rated low. Cultural Modifications was rated appropriate. Overall Rating is high with a national Scale of Importance.

Recreational – The Green River has an extended season of use 365 days a year. Hiking, fishing (both from watercraft or from the shore), rafting (generally in every season other than winter), sight seeing and biking (all seasons but summer) all occur during most seasons of the year. The 365 days a year aspect of the river allows for year round operation of businesses providing recreational services.

The Green River provides a unique opportunity for world class fishing from either a watercraft or from the shore, recreational rafting that combines non-technical whitewater rafting to leisurely floating, hiking and biking along the Little Hole National Recreation Trail, picnicking at the Little Hole Boat Ramp and Picnic area (Little Hole) or access to the river via 4-wheeled drive vehicles across from Little Hole. The river is enjoyed by individuals, families, large youth groups taking care of themselves or by persons with hired outfitters or guides. Photography and sight seeing from the Spillway Boat Ramp, several dam or river overlooks, or from Little Hole are all excellent. Driftboats, rafts, kick boats, canoes and kayaks are commonly used.

World-class fishing generally provides the highest recreational experience on the river. People come from all over the world to fish the Green River. Recreational rafters (mostly families and youth groups) return year after year. Hikers and bikers, rather they are fishing or not, all have an outstanding experience. Surveys determining the quality of visitor experience are all high.

Access is provided by the Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (US Highway 191) which travels over the dam and provides a unique experience just coming to the river. The access road from the highway to the river, a short 1 mile section of windy road with rock outcrops that extend out over the road, also provide a memorable experience. This segment has “highly acceptable” access with two launches areas (Spillway and Little Hole), and one take out area (Little Hole). Access is controlled and managed carefully to make sure users do not crowd the launch and takeout areas. Parking areas for autos and trailers are provided, along with launching facilities, restrooms, and signing. Boat ramps just below the dam and seven miles downstream at Little Hole provide excellent access for boat and raft launching or retrieval. Access to Little Hole also travels through the 2002 Mustang Burn which provides a unique contrast to the river corridor below.

An appropriate level of use during most seasons of the year occurs on the Green River. Crowding may occur during the summer during weekend and especially holiday weekends. For the youth groups that float the river, the interaction (water fights) with other groups is generally popular. Use occurs simultaneously with fishermen, hikers, rafters and sight seers. During week days and non-summer months, use is extensive but still allows for the kind of experience sought. Solitude can still be enjoyed.

The Green River provides for a wide range of activities. This ranges from those who view the river below from the dam or one of the several dam and river overlooks, to those who float the river enjoying the world class fishing, floating the rapids, or just enjoying the scenery. Hikers can hike either way up or down the river. Picnicking can occur at any one of the numerous beaches along the river. And of course, sight seeing can occur just about anywhere.

The world class fishing opportunities on the Green River attract fishermen from all over the world. Generally these persons contract with numerous outfitters and guides to float the river. Fish densities on the Green River are some of the highest in the world. Fish size is exceptional. The Green River is a well-known river-running destination for visitors from outside the local geographic area. Many visitors from the Salt Lake City County, Utah County, Davis County, and Cache County, as well as places in Wyoming and Colorado come to the Green River for its water recreation.

The Spillway access road, boat ramp and restrooms provides a highly appropriate starting point for enjoying the Green River. Even sight seers who aren't floating the river enjoy the ride down to explore the spillway area and just view the river and dam from below. The Little Hole Trail has either a natural or boardwalk footing and travels seven miles to Little Hole. Dam and river overlooks provide a great opportunity to view both features. The Little Hole Picnic area and boat ramps provides excellent facilities to end your float trip or begin one. Length of Season, Diversity of Use, Experience Quality, Associated Opportunities, Attraction, and Sites and Facilities were rated high. Access was rated highly appropriate. Level of Use was rated appropriate. Overall Rating was high with a national Scale of Importance.

Fish – The Green River is a world famous recreational trout fishing stream, and is one of the top “blue ribbon” fly fishing rivers in the United States. Anglers travel from all over the world to experience this exceptional tail water fishery which can produce trophy sized rainbow and brown trout. The Green River is economically essential to the local communities and its fishery values are considered outstandingly remarkable.

The tail water fishery provides excellent habitat for the targeted introduced trout species and native mountain whitefish. Dam releases can be manipulated through out the summer to provide trout with optimal water temperatures, thus maximizing metabolism and biomass assimilation. The cool clean water also provides favorable conditions for aquatic macro-invertebrate production, which constitutes almost 100 percent of the trout diet. Even with recent fire damage to the watershed fine sediment loads are relatively low through out the first 16 miles of stream, allowing both brown and rainbow trout to spawn and recruit naturally. Width to depth ratios are very high and micro-habitats including deep runs, pools and eddies are in high concentration.

The value of the species in the Green River is considered high due to the amount of income the communities receive from tourist dollars. Without these species of sport fish present to attract recreational anglers the communities would not experience a fraction of the current income realized. Densities of trout in the Green River rival those found anywhere in the world. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has not performed a quantitative population estimate on the river since the mid 1990’s. However, catch rates are extremely high and ocular observations of many fish can easily be made. A robust, naturally reproducing population of brown trout exists in the Green River. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources does augment the population with hatchery reared fish and brown trout are the dominant species downstream of the Little Hole boat ramp. A small number of wild rainbow trout also show up the creel and annual electro-fishing survey, but do not compare to brown trout numbers. Condition factors (length to weight relationship) of trout in the Green River are very high. Brown trout over 21 inches are common and have been caught up to 18 pounds. Rainbows over 20 inches and 3-5 pounds are also present. Habitat Quality, Value of Species, Abundance of Fish, Natural Reproduction, Size and Vigor of Fish were rated high. Diversity of Species was rated moderate. Overall Rating was high with a national Scale of Importance.

Wildlife – The Green River corridor encompasses a diversity of habitat types for wildlife such as river, riparian, wetland, cliff, pinyon/juniper, and sagebrush in the upland areas. These habitat-types provide excellent habitat for a high diversity of species including waterfowl, shorebirds, migratory birds, raptors, big game, small mammals (including bats), and water adapted mammals such as beaver and river otter. The Green River is the major source of water as well as riparian and wetland vegetation important for hiding, nesting, and foraging cover in this arid region. The steep cliffs provide nesting habitat for species such as raptors, swallow, small mammals, insects, and reptiles. Due to the topography and inaccessibility for human activities, these habitats have remained in an almost pristine condition.

Diversity of species for the Green River corridor is high since the diversity of habitats is also high, especially when compared to the surrounding xeric landscape. Several wildlife species that have been documented or are expected to occur in the Green River corridor are considered briefly here. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but to provide some insight into species diversity within the Green River corridor. Waterfowl and shore birds known or expected based on wetland and riparian habitat types occurring in sections along the Green River corridor or adjoining habitats include Canada geese, eared grebes, gadwalls, mallards, cinnamon teal, northern shovelers, pintails, Wilson’s phalarope, long-billed curlews, sandhill cranes, and great blue herons. In addition to species like the bald eagle, golden eagle and peregrine falcon, several other species of raptors have been observed within the Green River corridor including rough-legged hawks, red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, turkey vultures, prairie falcons, ospreys, and great horned owls. A number of passerines common to the intermountain west are expected

to occur within the Green River corridor at various times of the year. Included are many migratory neotropical species. Known nesters in woodland or sagebrush types in the upland areas along the Green River include mourning doves, common nighthawks, kingbirds, wrens, mountain bluebirds, and western meadowlarks. Other birds include the Virginia's warbler, loggerhead shrike, black-throated gray warbler, burrowing owl, pinyon jay, and sage sparrow. Bighorn sheep, mule deer, and occasionally elk and moose are common big game species encountered within the Green River corridor. Bighorn sheep use along the corridor has been occurring in recent years and is largely limited to the rocky cliffs. Other mammal species that depend on the Green River corridor include mountain lions, bobcats, black bear, pygmy rabbits, muskrats, woodrats, marmots, and several species of squirrels and mice. Some other water-adapted mammals include the river otter and beaver.

Due the presence of the Green River, abundance of wildlife species is high and may fluctuate in numbers during different times of the year, such as spring and fall migrations of waterfowl and other migratory bird species. The Green River also provides a water source, which can concentrate large numbers of wildlife species along this corridor. Habitat Quality, Diversity of Species, Abundance of Species were rated high. Overall Rating high and regional Scale of Importance.

Historic – John Wesley Powell is an important national figure. His journeys down the Green and Colorado Rivers were significant national events in the exploration and description of the West. His campsites at Little Hole and Red Creek can be identified from the photographs that were taken during the expedition. The large Ponderosa trees in Powell's photos at Little Hole are still living and help locate his campsite. The diaries and other accounts list the types of activities that transpired while the party was camped in those locations. These events and information provide a wealth of interpretive and educational opportunities. The watercourse corridor contains sites or features (John Wesley Powel camping sites) that are currently listed in, or is eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

Sites have regional or national importance for interpreting significant river events or people; the sites clearly and graphically reveal an interesting or unique history of the Region; and have the ability to attract visitors from outside the Region. The watercourse corridor represents a "textbook" example of historic events or provides the best example of historic culture or "river-related" events in the Region.

This segment has three historic themes and periods, i.e., exploration, fur trapping, and homesteading. River corridors that represent more than one historic theme or culture, that may have been used concurrently by more than one historic cultural group are of higher value. Significance, Education/Interpretation, Listing and Eligibility, number of Historic Themes or Periods were rated high. Site Integrity was rated low. Overall Rating was high with a national Scale of Importance.

Cultural – An incredible number of prehistoric sites exist along this section of the river. The USDI Bureau of Land Management is working on a cultural resource district for the Davenport Draw area and formally asked the Forest Service to include their portion of Little Hole in this designation. Multiple time periods are represented and a variety of site types have been recorded to date. Many of these sites are in excellent condition. For instance, the Hayes Site contained storage pits still filled with the maize and other plant matter the Fremont people of 700 to 1500 years ago had placed in them. The watercourse corridor has Paleo-Indian, archaic, Fremont, late-prehistoric, and historic cultures. The watercourse corridor represents "textbook" examples of the above mentioned cultures and provides one of the best examples of a culture or river-related event in the Region. The watercourse corridor contains sites or features that are currently listed in, or are eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or designated as a National Historic Landmark. Watercourses with such features, particularly if in abundance, are of higher value. Significance, Number of Cultures, Education/Interpretation, and Listing/Eligibility were rated high. Current Uses was rated low. Site Integrity was rated moderate. Overall Rating was high with a national Scale of Importance.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River Segment: Scenic

- Free of impoundments.
- Accessible in places by roads.
- Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads.
- Water quality and flow sufficient to maintain outstandingly remarkable values.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – Land ownership of this river segment is broken up as follows. Mileages begin at Flaming Gorge Dam (mile 0) and move downstream (mile 12.6).

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0 - 5	Ashley National Forest (both sides of the river)	1600
5-7	Division of Wildlife Resources administered lands - State of Utah (south side of the river)	320
5-7	Ashley National Forest (north side of river)	320
7-12.6	Bureau of Land Management (south side of river)	896
7-12.6	Ashley National Forest (north side of the river)	896
	Total	4032

Readers Note: The study area boundaries displayed in Appendix A, Suitability Evaluation Reports, do not represent actual Wild and Scenic River boundaries, but the area of interest for eligible river segments. It should be noted that of the eligible rivers studied, 14 of the 86 river segments appear to include portions of private land, at the end of segments near the National Forest boundary. These typically short river stretches (1/4 to 4 miles long) were included in the eligibility study as part of the river segment length because they brought the river segment to a logical terminus at a confluence with a larger stream, also contained the ORVs of the National Forest portion of the segment, or National Forest land was located within ¼ mile of these segments. These lengths are also included in the tables found in this suitability study. The magnitude of this effect is small, representing approximately 22 miles total over 14 segments, or less than 3 percent of the total mileage in the study. The final decision will apply only to river segments located on National Forest System lands. The dashed lines on the individual river maps represent the approximate 1/4 mile river corridor boundary of the river segment under study. If Congress chooses to add any of the recommended river segments to the National Wild and Scenic River System, the Forest Service would be required to develop Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP). Section 3(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the establishment of detailed boundaries (an average of not more than 320 acres per river mile). At that time, the boundary would be adjusted to exclude private, State, or other Federal agency land located at the end or beginning of the river segment. Congress could include private lands (in holdings) within the boundaries of the designated river area, however, management restrictions would apply only to public lands.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values. Minimum lot size is either 40, 80, or 160 acres within these Multiple Use Districts. There are various permitted and conditional uses such as agriculture, forestry, mining, power generation and regulations related to

residences. The Uniform Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for Daggett County are available at <http://www.daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=8>.

More information on guidance related to land uses can be found in the Daggett County General Plan, available at <http://daggettcountry.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=61>.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – There are no large past or currently active minerals or energy development activities, mining claims, or minerals leases located adjacent to this river segment (www.geocommunicator.gov). Based on the underlying geology, and lack of past minerals and energy development, little if any future mineral or energy extraction activities would be expected.

Water Resources Development – The Flaming Gorge reservoir and dam are the key water development features in the area. There are Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands associated with the reservoir that extend down the eligible segment, with the exception of the lands administered by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and the final 1.8 miles of the segment. Future water development is not expected because of the social, economic, scenic, recreational, fisheries, wildlife, historic, and cultural values associated this eligible segment. The Utah State Water Plan for the Uintah Basin (which includes Daggett County), does not identify any proposed water development projects on this segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights and agreements.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Flaming Gorge/Uintas National Scenic Byway (US Highway 191) provides access to and across Flaming Gorge Dam. A Forest Service and Bureau of Reclamation service road provides access to the Spillway Boat Ramp immediately below the dam. The canyon and river areas from the Spillway Boat Ramp to Little Hole Boat Ramp (approximately 7 miles) are accessed by the Little Hole National Recreation Trail. Forest Development Road 075 provides access to the Little Hole Boat Ramp. At this boat ramp, the Little Hole National Recreation Trail continues along the segment for approximately 1.0 miles. The remaining 4.6 miles of the river segment to the boundary of the National Forest/Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area is accessed by an undeveloped trail.

Rights of Way—There are two pipeline rights of way within this segment. There are also four rights of way for roads in the segment.

Grazing Activities – On National Forest System lands, there is no permitted livestock grazing along the river corridor. On lands administered by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources permitted grazing is allowed on a limited basis. On lands administered by the BLM, the river corridor is fenced, and livestock are kept ¼ mile away from the river. Limited grazing within the river corridor may be allowed at times.

Recreation Activities – Recreational activities and setting were described in detail in the summary of outstandingly remarkable values. One potential change in these use patterns could occur when the Brown's Park road is paved. Currently, the shuttle between Little Hole and Brown's Park is 35 miles, ½ of which is on dirt roads that are difficult to travel in wet conditions. When this is paved, use could increase in the lower sections (downstream of Little Hole). The paving is scheduled for the fall of 2007, but could be delayed until 2008.

Other Resource Activities – The river corridor is not suitable for timber harvest, and no other resource activities are expected in the future.

Special Designations – All of the lands administered by the Ashley National Forest are within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA). The legislation establishing this NRA specified three broad missions and management goals. Specifically, these are to administer, protect, and develop the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area in a manner to best provide for: (1) public outdoor recreation

benefits, (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment, and (3) management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources that will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area was established.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986) identifies the following management prescriptions for this area:

- (n₁) National Recreation Area – Existing Situation. These are lands in the NRA that have the existing low management prescription applied. Activities and practices recognize and emphasize the recreation and wildlife values within the NRA. Standards and guidelines are modified to comply with Public Law 90-540. The riparian objective is to protect. This management prescription encompasses the majority of the river corridor.
- (r) Wildlife. This management area consists of those lands identified as having special or critical wildlife capabilities in the Flaming Gorge NRA. The objective is to maintain or increase wildlife species diversity and numbers while meeting the direction for protection of recreation and visual resources. The riparian objective is to protect. The management prescription applies to small areas within the river corridor upstream and downstream of Little Hole, north side of the river.

The first 5 miles of the segment are within an inventoried roadless area. The area downstream of Little Hole on the Ashley National Forest (north side of river), is also within an inventoried roadless area.

Socio-Economic Environment – The two main communities in Daggett County are Manila and Dutch John, with populations of 685 and 204, respectively (2007 estimates). The county is set in a spectacular outdoor setting, where traditional land uses such as agriculture, timber harvest and livestock grazing have been important over time. The economy in Daggett County is based primarily on agriculture, livestock, hay, and alfalfa, but it is also an important producer of electric power for Utah and surrounding states. Dutch John originally provided a living place for those who worked at the Flaming Gorge dam.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Sheep Creek Geologic Area, Spirit Lake, the Green River and other outdoor attractions draw visitors to the area. Travel and tourism is an integral part of the local economy. The Flaming Gorge reservoir and the Green river are regional and national attractions. Both the reservoir and the Green River play an integral role in the local socio-economic environment. For example, there are 3 raft rental shops and 3 fly shops that cater to river enthusiasts on the Green River. 1.7 million dollars are brought into the area annually from customers of outfitter guides (13 total) on the Green River.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – This segment is administered by the USFS, the State of Utah, and the BLM.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) The extent and determination of the degree to which the agency proposes or a State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including the costs thereof, should it be proposed for inclusion in the System.

The State of Utah has not shown interest or disinterest in sharing the costs of management of these

segments.

The Flaming Gorge District Ranger indicates that local county officials would support the designation of this segment, in order to promote the Green River corridor and increase tourism in the area, but would not share in the costs.

(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any conflicting local zoning and/or land use controls that could occur.

National Forest System Lands in Daggett County are zoned as Multiple Use Districts. Some of the purposes for providing a Multiple Use District are to establish areas in mountain, hillside, canyon, mountain valley, desert and other open and generally undeveloped lands where human habitation would be limited, in order to protect land and open space resources. These areas are intended to encourage use of the land, where appropriate, for forestry, grazing, agriculture, mining, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Additional purposes include avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, danger from brush land fires, damage to grazing, livestock raising, and to wildlife values.

Wild and Scenic designation would be inconsistent with the stated purposes of forestry, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Designation would be consistent with the protection of land and open space resources, wildlife habitat, avoiding excessive damage to watersheds, water pollution, soil erosion, and danger from fires.

The Forest Service should designate the Green River because the current management of property owned by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is consistent with designation. (3-25f).

(3) Support or opposition to designation.

Comments received during the eligibility study:

Various members of the public were opposed to the designation of this segment. Reasons for opposition included potential effects to future and downstream water developments, the level of development along the corridor should preclude it from being eligible, and that this segment should not be considered regionally important because of improvements and modifications already in place.

Daggett County officials have indicated support for the designation of the Green River into the Wild and Scenic River System. Some of the reasons for support would be to promote the river corridor and to increase tourism.

The High Uintas Preservation Council, the Uinta Mountain Club, the Utah Rivers Council, and various members of the public were in support of designation. Some reasons in support of designation were the preservation of various outstandingly remarkable values, the prevention of further development or modification of river segments, and the protection of river segments within inventoried roadless areas.

Some commentors expressed opposition to all the eligible segments on the Ashley National Forest, except the Green River below Flaming Gorge dam. This segment was unique in the comments received, as it did have some support from those who were otherwise opposed Wild and Scenic designation.

Comments received during scoping for the suitability study:

Many letters supporting designation of this stretch of the Green River were received during scoping, including endorsements from approximately 25 different organizations and river-related businesses. These letters cited a variety of reasons, including recreational, economic, and ecological values, for their support.

Opposing views were expressed by Central Utah, Duchesne and Uintah Water Conservancy Districts

based on concerns that designation would interfere with water exchanges or upstream storage. Although no new storage projects are planned for the Green River, a Water Development Prospectus identified a need to use surplus Green River water in conjunction with potential projects elsewhere in the Uintah Basin. The State of Utah expressed concern that designation would interfere with operation of Flaming Gorge reservoir. The State of Utah also expressed concerns that designation would restrict the state's ability to maintain or expand the highway.

A letter submitted by Sweetwater County Conservation District on behalf of Sweetwater County and Conservation District and Uinta County Conservation District in Wyoming stated that residents of those counties would be affected by designation of the Green River, raised questions about the study process, and requested cooperating agency status for all three entities.

Comments responding to the Draft EIS

Among the organizations and individuals in favor of WSR designation there was particularly strong support for rivers highlighted in the Utah Rivers Council letter, i.e., many letters singled out the **Green River** as a river they considered exemplary. Some letters focused solely on this river; others included it in a list of rivers they supported but with additional comments specific to values or their personal experiences on the Green River. All of the three organized campaigns supported the Green River for designation. Those who opposed designation of the Green River segment cited potential conflicts with operation of Flaming Gorge Dam (timing and amount of water released), the possibility that certain areas below the dam may need to be riprapped in the future, and the level of development already in the river corridor as detracting from its scenic character.

(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.

Designation would complement the existing direction in the NRA and inventoried roadless areas.

Designation would also be consistent with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources emphasis on maintaining high quality wildlife and fisheries habitat. The recreational fishery in the Green River is nationally and world renowned, and is one of the top "blue ribbon" fisheries in the United States. Wild and Scenic designation would be consistent with the management and protection of this resource.

From 1992 to present, the dam has been operated to meet the requirement of the four endangered fish in the river segments beyond the National Forest boundary. This is being done by releasing peak flows that more closely resemble pre-dam conditions. Wild and Scenic designation would be consistent with preserving and maintaining habitat for these four endangered fish species downstream of the eligible segment.

As discussed in suitability factor (2), designation may be both inconsistent and consistent with county zoning ordinances. The Daggett County General Plan does not specifically address Wild and Scenic River designation, but it does make the following statement about water resources:

"Adequate water quality and availability is necessary for significant residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and recreational development. Daggett County desires to protect and enhance the quality and quantity of usable water by promoting and expanding the efficient management and use of water resources. The County also feels that private water rights should be protected from encroachment and/or coerced acquisition."

Further indication of the County's position regarding Wild and Scenic River designation can be found in an amendment to their General Plan (responding to a BLM Wild and Scenic River study):

"It is Daggett County's policy that no river segment should be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System unless:

- Water is present and flowing at all times.
- The water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of

comparison consisting of one of three physiographic provinces of the state, and that the rationale and justification for the conclusion are disclosed.

- BLM fully disclaims in writing any interest in water rights with respect to the subject segment.
- It is clearly demonstrated that including segment in the NWSR system will not prevent, reduce, impair, or otherwise interfere with the state and its citizen's enjoyment of complete and exclusive water rights in and to rivers of the state as determined by the laws of the state, nor interfere with or impair local, state, regional, or interstate water compacts to which the State or Daggett County is a party.
- The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed.
- It is clearly demonstrated that BLM does not intend to use such a designation to improperly impose Class I or II Visual Resource Management prescriptions.
- It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed addition will not adversely impact the local economy agricultural and industrial operations, outdoor recreation, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment.

The foregoing also summarizes the wild and scenic river criteria of the State of Utah, Utah Code ' 63-38d-401(8)(a), as well as the criteria of Daggett County.”

(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.

This segment is on National Forest System Lands, lands administered by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and lands administered by the BLM. Designation could provide a comprehensive and holistic protection strategy between these government agencies, other cooperating agencies such as local governments, and public groups.

(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.

The outfitter guides on the Green River would continue to support and participate in river clean up efforts.